their own brothers and sisters was known. The impression 582
the investigator obtained from all of these things was that 596
the patrilineage, expressed in the mal or "house," strongly
overrode the lateral calculation of relations to extend or
broaden the kinship group. Marriages undertaken for 581
economic or social advantage add to the divergency, inas-
much as they bring together at one point unrelated groups.
It must be remembered, however, that Rowandus was re-
settled from various sources after its destruction in the
First World War, and the marriages of its families, many
of them migrants to the town, cannot be expected to show
the characteristics of a similar community whose popul-
ation had been left undisturbed. In the agricultural 621
villages of the district, it was said, somewhat arbitrarily, 602
that "everyone is related," but one suspects, in view of the 571
importance of the patrilineage and the form of inheritance,
that even in these places marriages characteristically
cause divergence in forming new family or mal-groups, and
the village population is constantly regrouping, rather
than constituting a systematically interrelated whole.

The Kurdish kinship nomenclature, as recorded at 601
Rowandus, makes systematic use of a limited number of
basic terms. The first group of these, twelve in number,
indicate consanguineal relationships, those held to be
in the "milk" of the mother or in the "blood:"

1.	Bab pir	("Old Father")	Grandfather
2.	Dê pir	("Old Mother")	Grandmother
3.	Bab	("Father")	Father
4.	Dê	("Mother")	Mother

[Text continues on page 237]

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

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keep their wives in seclusion, and this practice has quite recently sprung up being due to Turkish influence ..."[6]. And Edmonds writes: "Many travellers before 1914 recorded their impression that Kurdish women enjoyed in general a good deal more freedom than their Arab, Turkish and Persian sisters"[7]. In regard to marriage and the polygyni mentioned by the Coran and known in other Muslim areas, Eagle[8] declares that: "The Kurd from north to south is monogamous" adding[9] "free intercourse between the sexes is the rule, and the result is a large number of love marriages ...".

[B45] B34 581

It is fact that the individual Kurdish woman of the upper class has, in situations difficult for the Kurdish people, sprung into the limelight, which seems incompatible with the view adopted concerning woman's restricted possibilities of action in Muslim areas, but may possibly be due to the prominent position of their families[10]. Khanem Osman Pasha, Lady Adile of Halabja[11] of the Ardalan Vazir family, married to Osman Pasha of the Begzade family, is the best known case. Her husband, towards the end of the Turkish period, was made the qa'im maqam in Halabja. Even whilst he was alive all effective authority passed to his wife. In 1910 Major Soane lived as a servant with her son, Tahir Beg, after Soane had accepted Islam in 1906 and, under the name of Mirza Ghulam Hussein Shirazi, travelled in these areas in disguise. Later, under the British mandate after 1918, a spy also, now a widow, with whom the British political officers negotiated. Her personality must have been

175 562 565

Fig. 2. Village aristocracy. Married women at the garden basin, Sarkan.
Fig. 3. Village aristocracy. Married women making cigarettes, Sarkan. (See p. 10).

562 [B45] B34 581 175 562 565 142

CHAPTER IV

LIFE CYCLE

BIRTH

Bringing children into the world is the justification and love of the Oriental marriage—also the Kurdish.

The following particulars concerning birth were given me by the shekh's wife at Tapawra.

Parturition takes place in a sitting posture. One of the ordinary copper cooking pots, a milk pail, is placed on the floor between-legs. Over this is laid a thin, padded mattress on which the woman in labour rests herself. An assistant places herself behind, holds her under the arms, and supports her back. Another squats down in front so that the woman about to give birth can grasp her round the neck. This woman in front acts as the midwife. She may be an ordinary, experienced woman from the village. However, in Sarkan there was a midwife who had undergone a three months course in Baghdad, and the woman who had assisted the two wives in my interpreter's home at the 27 births that had taken place there, was stated to be a fully-trained midwife, thus the first to be trained in Sulaimaniyah. At the time I was there this woman was about 30 years of age.

Births take place in one of the rooms of the house. I was told that the father can be present. The umbilical cord is cut by knife or scissors. The Arab doctor at the Dokan Dam Site told me that in case of a sudden birth out in the mountains, the umbilical cord could be severed by a sharp stone, another stone being used as base.

In the villages I visited there was no doctor. Even a complicated birth was left to the local authorities in the form of an experienced neighbour or a midwife with a three month certificate. A female German gynecologist at the hospital at Sulaimaniyah told of a case where the birth came to a stop in one of the villages. The fetus was dead, and the woman had lain for 24 hours with all her internal functions at a standstill, while the village women debated whether or not the dangerously ill woman should be transported by mule over the mountains to Sulaimaniyah (a most unusual situation). Finally it was decided to send her to the town where her life was saved thanks to the efforts of the gynecologist.

In another case a woman in Sarkan contracted milk fever after giving birth. She was taken on horseback and then by bus to the hospital at Sulaimaniyah. The child, which was a few days old, could not be taken and died during the woman's absence.

The new-born child, naked, is wrapped in a piece of cotton material that acts as a nappy and is changed three times a day. It is then laid on a large piece of material folded into a triangle that reaches to the shoulders and is somewhat larger than the legs. The cloth is about 1.50 m. x 1.50 m. The child's legs are straightened out and the lower points of the cloth are bent up around the feet. The two upper

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

585 114 581 991

the deed is drawn up at the judge's residence and not in a mosque, which is a place of prayer and not (like Christian churches) a form of registration office. The same view is to be found in Blackman[58], who says that among Muslims no religious ceremony takes place—marriage is not a sacrament. Levy also states that "in Islam marriage is a secular contract and not a religious rite"[59]. This is not in accord with Kurdish conditions. That the drawing up of a marriage settlement here seems to be governed by religious precepts seems to be indicated by, for example, the presence of the *mulla*. According to Jayakar[60] matrimonial law and the rights of inheritance are generally considered more or less connected with religion, and within the dual legal system, spiritual and temporal, matrimonial and family rights fall to the spiritual judge. Islam is more than a religion, it is a whole system comprising all aspects of human life[61]. It would be highly remarkable if the drawing up of the marriage settlement should be a temporal act in view of the fact that the justification for the paying of a bride price is found in the Coran[62]. Rather can it be said that the drawing up of a marriage settlement within the *shafi'i* rite of Islām, which the Kurds follow, is an act connected with religion. What on the other hand is distinct from the drawing up of the marriage settlement is the consummation of the marriage, which failing a better expression, what can be termed "the wedding". It has nothing to do either with the secular or spiritual authorities, being a purely private affair that sooner or later, often years after the drawing up of the marriage settlement, takes place in the form of a family festival with friends. This occasion, as opposed to the drawing up of the marriage settlement, can be said to be a secular, and particularly a quite private, action.

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584 369

The social intercourse of engaged couples in the event of prospective spouses knowing each other.

In the educated urban milieu of Sulaimani I met one example of a couple who knew each other before marriage and had themselves chosen each other. This, of course, is the exception and was due entirely to their milieu.

The girl in the case was the 23 year old sister of my interpreter. Both she and the young man in question were primary schoolteachers who had met as colleagues and fallen in love. When the young man realized his interest in the girl he had applied to my interpreter, also a schoolteacher, as his family lived outside in one of the village areas from which no woman, mother or sister, was able to act as go-between. He told her that "he would like to be admitted to her family", and asked if she would act as his advocate and place the matter before her father. This had been done and the marriage settlement had been drawn up a year before my stay in Kurdistan. The wedding festival was imminent and took place whilst I lived with the family. In the months prior to the wedding I was able to study the pattern of behaviour applying to former colleagues now engaged, and the position of the prospective groom in the family he was to enter.

By the marriage settlement the young man became a member of the family to such an extent that he could, with her 13 year old half-brother, to accompany my interpreter to the village of Topzawa where she was to live with me in the sheikh's house. The night he spent there in order to act as an important escort and to investigate whether conditions there were sufficiently re-assuring, he was able to sleep in the same room as her half-brother and herself. My interpreter explained that she might

• 58 [59] In the case of a marriage between non-relatives, where no direct exchange of women is arranged, the bridoprice is quite high, running from £ 30 to 100 — and these prices are in fact paid. This is considered to correspond to the actual economic value of a woman, as no obligation — e. g. a return marriage in the next generation — remains. Because of the size of the sum involved, it is often vital for the young man to avoid full payment, and the high incidence of cousin marriage, as well as of sister exchange, may be seen partly as a result of this.

It is on the other hand more difficult to explain how the father can be willing to forego his right to a bridoprice in the case of a nephew. His household is quite separate from that of his brother and nephew, and non-payment of bridoprice constitutes a direct net loss. The origin of the rule might conceivably be sought in a now passed patrilineal extended family organization, where transfer of property between brothers would be meaningless. Today, the pattern is an established privilege of certain categories of relatives, enforced by those who profit from it. And the right is indeed enforced, as [illegible] by the appearance of the father-in-law and by the not infrequent murder of girls refusing their cousins (e. g. Hay, 1921 p. 71). Stories of such conflicts are very popular among Kurds, and the occasional forceful reminders serve to assure the privilege.

Probably the most fundamental consideration inducing a man to give his daughter to a brother's son has the character of a positive sanction, and is connected with the feud, and political power in general. In essence, it may be summarized as follows: A man's power is proportional to the number of riflemen he can mobilize to support his case. Especially in the feud situation, these alignments of younger men around an older leader are in lineage terms. If a man has alienated his nephews by denying them their traditional rights, he will have great difficulties rallying them in time of need. A marriage between his daughter and a brother's son contributes positively to prevent such alienation of collateral branches. No other son-in-law can fill this function, since a man is not regarded as responsible for his affinals *qua* affinals. The only persons who can be expected to give such political support are co-lineage males. — After a descrip-

tion of the Kurdish lineage organization we shall return to a more 581
complete discussion of these interrelations (pp. 49 ff).

Plural wives are rather uncommon in the villages, though they are 587
thought to be a quite desirable investment for the man who can [594]
afford it. The average incidence for 94 men in 4 villages runs c. 4 %.
The levirate is not infrequently practised, but more as a convenience
than as an established rule or right. Unless the widow has a well
established father or brother, she tends to remain in the house of
her late husband under the protection of her brother-in-law, in
which case he might as well have some return for his expenses. Strict
observance of the Islamic rule of unlawful conjunction however
prevents him from doing this if his first wife is a close relative of
the widow (and where cousin marriage is common, this will be a
fairly frequent limitation). The sororate is not known as a marriage
position.

A patrilineal system of rights and privileges organizes the house- 573
hold group. Following Moslem ideals, the adult male has complete
control, and can make any decisions he sees fit. This Islamic rule
seems slightly to exceed Kurdish popular feeling on the matter. It
is very difficult to obtain any impression of the internal workings of
a Moslem family, but one has the feeling that Kurdish women have
considerable influence in the close family circle. Occasionally this
even carries outside the kinship group, as a woman may come to
occupy a high political position. Similarly, the father's absolute
authority is strongly questioned by the sons, as indicated by the
frequency of maternal avoidance. There are almost irresistible tensions
concerned with the setting up of an independent household for a
married son — the father tends to resist this reduction of his power,
and for the son it takes on the color of breaking free and becoming
fully adult. However, with moral sanctions and de-facto power
supporting him, the father certainly occupies the central position as
authority and organizer of the group.

In the case of a widow with one or several sons, the household is
named after the major son, and the actual position of authority

expecting men should not engage in economic pursuits, their main role was formerly that of warriors, protecting the people and flocks from attacks by other groups. Only the very poor herded their own cattle. Where one person does not own enough animals to make up the normal herding unit of 100, composite herds are created along kinship lines, with father, brother, sons, etc. Differences in wealth are tremendous, apparently as a maximum scale, some persons owning a total of 2,000 animals, some as few as 10, some quite destitute and dependent on richer relatives for subsistence and work.

With the tendency towards parallel cousin marriage, every group tends to split up into separate lineages, which constitute separate over long periods of time. Thus semi-endogamous sections are created within the tire tmill, usually identified with separate *khels*. But since the *khel* is a residential unit, the main unity of which stems from economic ties, persons of any lineage section may travel for longer or shorter periods with any *khel* to which their economic activities might attach them. Generally, one of these semi-endogamous lineage sections will form the wealthy core of a *khel*, to which a more or less variable group of [illegible] are connected by economic ties.

These endogamous tendencies are also operative in the family of the *Rais*. The position as *Rais* is inherited, and the family of the *Rais* therefore takes on the appearance of a noble class or caste. The process by which such a caste would truly emerge, however, would be through intermarriage with the wealthy lineage segments of other tires. There seem in fact to be few such kinship ties established between *Rais* families of different groups. A certain number of marriages will be exogamous as far as the *Rais* family is concerned, if only from the occasional lack of available spouses in the limited family group. But these exogamous marriages more frequently establish ties between the *Rais* and wealthy lineage segments among the commoners within the tire tmill. It would thus seem that marriages are manipulated to reinforce the power of the *Rais* within the tire tmill, rather than to separate him off as a member of a distinctive and noble caste. To rely a distinction between noblemen and commoners within the tire would thus be an error, since the separa-

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1955 9A11 Kurd 9A11

ocess of the *Ratt* lineage follows from common marriage usage, and is no different in nature from the supervision of the wealthier as compared to the poorer lineage sections of the group.

The hereditary position as *Ratt* is simply vested in the leading lineage segment of the *tira*. An interesting problem arises as to what adjustments are made in the event of decline in wealth or the appearance of other impediments to leadership in this lineage. It is customary for persons in a position of leadership to appoint their successor, usually a son, while they are still in a position of control. In the case of disagreement between the existing *Ratt* and the general population as to who should succeed him, the pattern of succession is probably decided by the line in the balance between the positive power (primarily economic) of the *Ratt*, and the degree of general resentment to his decision. Where the power and prestige of the *Ratt* has declined, leadership might thus fairly easily be shifted to a stronger and wealthier collateral line. (Compare p. 124 for a more usually democratic mechanism of appointing successor to the *Ratt*.)

[illegible] vested in the *Ratt*. It would seem to be rather dependent on his means and personality, but, these permitting, to afford him considerable possibilities to enforce his decisions. He is on the other hand regarded as being subject to the *Beys* in all matters, and directly responsible to them.

The *Bey* leaders of the *Jaf* are sometimes represented to belonging to a *tira* of their own, the *Beyzade*; more correctly the *Beyzade* is regarded as a family or *hoz*, divided into the three branches Welled Begi, Kikhurwa Begi, and Baluwa Begi. The political head may be drawn from any of these. The Kikhurwa Begi and Baluwa Begi of today are descended by 7 generations from the common ancestor *Zaher* Beg. The Welled Begi are somewhat further removed. All the *Beyzade* are now settled and live as absentee landowners of numerous *Jaf* and other villages. It is thus extremely difficult to form any picture of the true position of the leaders in the political organization of the nomadic *Jaf*. Some 60 years ago, authority was divided between the two Beyzade brothers Osman and Mahmud Pasha, the latter being the leader of the nomadic section. Mahmud Pasha was

he also exercises certain rights in his relations with the landowner — 622
he can e. g. exclude any newcomer from village membership.

Among the various villages in an area, or those belonging to one landowner, there is no attempt at coordination. My host owned among others, the three neighboring villages Hazar Mard, Deconi and D'urbare in the Sulaimani valley. These villages share, for historical reasons, the usufruct rights to the surrounding area. Rather than making any attempt at concerted action in matters concerning them all, e. g. by meetings of the village headmen, there exists considerable enmity between the three villages. A marriage between the son of 531
the *Akkha* of Deconi and the daughter of the leading family of Hazar Mard does not seem to have had any «political» results, and was probably manipulated to enhance the prestige of the *Akkha* and his son in their own village.

GENERAL FEATURES OF POLITICAL SYSTEMS

The application of these formal political organizations, both of 554
the lineage and feudal types, is modified by one basic principle, namely, the universal application of [illegible] ting lack of conceptualization of «the office», as apart from the total person occupying it at any one moment. An example might illustrate the point: Upon my arrival in the village of Deconi, a small group of workmen were engaged in laying a brick floor in the local house of my host, the landowner. In their social classification of me, the only criterion available to them was the fact of my being his guest; so I enjoyed a reflection of his high status position, and consequently found myself in a relation of super-ordination with respect to the workmen. They found it necessary to interrupt their work snatched to perform personal services for me, e. g. serving me my tea, etc. The workmen, brought to the village for the sole purpose of laying the brick floor, had no feeling that theirs was only a part-role in the situation, where they were expected to perform a specific service and no more. The status of bricklayers is clearly inferior to that of friend-of-the-landowner; the fact that their contract was by virtue of their office as bricklayers did not release them from universal sub-ordination to the occupier of higher status. Wherever a

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

Chapter III.

A. Kinship composition and organization of local groups.
B. The blood feud.

KINSHIP COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION OF LOCAL GROUPS

The important dichotomy between tribal and non-tribal villages has been touched upon previously, and the actual differences in the formal political organization have been outlined. The following table (No. 3) attempts to illustrate co-variation between the type of formal political organization and the frequency of certain marriage patterns, resulting in a contrast in the kinship composition of local groups. In the limited period of fieldwork, and due to local difficulties in connection with land tenure and military training, it was not feasible to collect extensive census materials; and the table should serve as an illustration of a point, the validity of which was checked more extensively by less exact means, and does not pretend in itself to be statistically conclusive. 621 581

A further comment should be made to justify the separation of tribal vs. non-tribal frequencies in the ex-tribals village of Koni Sard. The non-tribal category is made up of recent immigrant families, largely born or even married in other villages, and does not truly belong in the table as representative of Koni Sard.

The generalization that seems to hold for all the villages which were investigated would be: A contrast exists between the frequency

of cousin marriage in tribal as compared to non-tribal villages, high frequencies of cousin marriage being associated with a *tribal* political system, that is, with the lineage type organization. General village endogamy, on the other hand, remains high in the non-tribal villages, marriages exogamous with respect to the village having similar low frequencies in both groups.

Table III.
Illustration of the correlation between political organization and frequency of marriage with relatives

NAME OF VILLAGE:	own village:					foreign village:	total
	[illegible]	[illegible]	parents	other relatives	non-relatives		
NON-TRIBAL:							
Djabana	6	1	1	9	19	10	46
	village endogamy: 79 %						
	family endogamy: 17 %						
	cousin marriage: 17 %						
TRIBAL:							
Tangik (Hasanwand)	3	1	—	2	1		
Kani Sard "	4	—	2	1	1	3	21
	village endogamy: 80 %						
	family endogamy: 71 %						
	cousin marriage: 57 %						
Kani Sard (non-tribal)	—	—	1	—	—	6	7

As a result of these contrasting frequencies of marriage types, the kinship composition of the two types of villages show important differences. The tribal village constitutes one close-knit kinship group, or is made up of distinct endogamous lineage segments of a larger lineage group. The non-tribal village, on the other hand, presents a less organized picture in terms of biological relationships: though predominantly endogamous, it is internally essentially unstructured above the household level. The non-tribal village might

7: Barth E-5 (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

thus be considered an example of Murdock's *demo* type of community, that is, an endogamous, but unstructured localized kin group (Murdock 1949, p. 63). 621 571 •

Some of the interrelations between marriage patterns, kinship composition of local groups, and type of political organization are fairly clear. In the tribal political system, patrilineal descent is of considerable importance. Membership in the political unit itself depends on patrilineal descent and one gains prestige from belonging to particular segments of the larger lineage. As compared to the non-tribal village, the whole status system is considerably more elaborated, as one would expect in a traditional system. Since marriage, both according to Islamic law and general Kurdish values should be between equals, and since each lineage segment wishes to preserve its own status position (and may in fact tend to over-rate it), neither sex is willing to marry *down* in the social scale, and near-kin marriage is the reasonable solution. Most clear is the status equivalence of children of brothers, and FaBrDa becomes the preferred spouse. [61]

This emphasis on equivalence is however only one factor inducive to a pattern of FaBrDa marriage. Perhaps more important is its political significance, briefly indicated previously.

A comparison of the tribal and non-tribal patterns may clarify this point. In the tribal system, power relations on the village level are more amenable to manipulation than in the non-tribal system, where most power is vested in the absentee landowner. At the same time, these power relations in the tribal village are defined in lineage and kinship terms. A man can only expect political support from his immediate agnatic relatives — those who by descent belong to his political sub-section — primarily brothers, sons, and brothers' sons, the relations to the latter being most critical. Political obligations can be reinforced in this group by giving them a daughter in marriage; conversely, the group would be alienated by being refused that daughter. The man who marries his daughter out of the lineage segment and takes a high bride-price for her thereby converts her into an economic asset, but also isolates himself from his agnatic relatives, his potential political supporters. He can then expect no support in a situation where actual *power* is important, such as in

factional disputes or feud, and his initial economic advantage gained from the daughter's marriage is thus abrogated. FaBrDa marriage thus reinforces the political implications of the lineage system. These relations might be summarized as follows:

TRIBAL:

power relations subject to manipulation	+	political units defined by agnatic kinship.	=	political emphasis to marriage — high freq. of FaBrDa marriage.

In the non-tribal village, on the other hand, the power relations are given to greater extent, in the sense that they are outside the control of most villagers. Furthermore, they are based on economic considerations more than on kinship. The political units are similarly not lineage segments, but defined purely in regional and residential terms. As a result, marriages are manipulated more for economic ends, wealth being the main criterion of village standing. In marrying off a daughter, a man therefore attempts either to take a high brideprice, or to create a link of kinship with an other family in the residential unit. Thus, in a circular way, FaBrDa marriage decreases and the importance of affinals in the endogamous community increases. This can be seen in the bilateral character of the kinship blocks that form the factions in a tenant village, as contrasted to the patrilineal lineage segments of the tribal village. For comparison with the tribal system, these relations might be summarized as follows:

NONTRIBAL:

power relations more given, economic in origin	+	political units geographically defined	=	economic emphasis to marriage — lower freq. of FaBrDa marriage.

62 / The unity of the local group in the tribal system springs from an unquestioned solidarity; the leader of such a group has few if any coercive means at his disposal. His powers are of the patriarchal, informal, kinship-modeled type, and generally derive from the fact of kinship. This in conjunction with the marriage pattern tends to produce a rather small local group in the settled tribal areas. Lineage

can trace patrilineal descent from Ali unless the *whole tira* claims such descent. None of the South Kurdish *tiras* attempt this, however. *Sheikhs* are consequently characteristic of the non-tribal areas, where they occupy the whole gamut of social positions from landless laborer to feudal lord.

In characteristic Kurdish fashion, *Sheikh* families tend to split up into small endogamous lineage segments, and, though the census materials gathered from a few villages is not statistically reliable in the matter, there is strong suggestion that FaBrDa or other close kin marriage reaches considerably higher frequency than usual in tenant villages, and approaches that found in the politically organized lineages, the *tiras*. However, any embracive *organization* uniting the whole *Sheikh* descent group, or major segments of it, such as would in fact convert it into a type of widely dispersed *tira*, is lacking. It would on the other hand be equally misleading to think of the *Sheikh* group as an endogamous caste, since extra-group marriages do in fact take place, and the emphasis is not on *Sheikh* endogamy but, in usual Kurdish fashion, on *local lineage* endogamy. It is convenient to think more in terms of these local endogamous *Sheikh* lineages, where they are found in the village community, and relate their comparatively higher endogamy to an effort to retain a special status in the *local* community by not dispersing kinship obligations too *widely* in that community. Where *Sheikh* families occupy higher social positions, this stress on lineage endogamy tends to disappear, or seems to reflect efforts to prevent the dispersal of family property through the multiple Koranic inheritance rights.

An example of a *Sheikh* lineage group of tenant farmers, residing in a small village community, might be given. Of 33 households in the village, *7 are* of the *Sheikh* lineage, the *remaining* 26 belonging to various larger and smaller kin groups. Of the heads of *these 7* *Sheikh* households, 4 have married a FaBrDa, 2 another close relative, and only 1 a non-relative from outside the community (the *sister of* a neighboring headman). At least in this generation, there is thus no intermarriage with other families in the local community.

The head of the *Sheikh* lineage is regarded as the most important man in the village, but he is not elected *kikhe* (village headman).

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MAll Kurd MAll

The present *Akke*, whose father and grandfather held the post before him, belongs to another, slightly larger kin block, counting at least 9 households. Furthermore, the frequency of family endogamy in this family of which the *Akke* is the head is less than 10 %, which may account for his «wider appeal» in the community. Thus the emphasis on the special status of the *Sheikh* lineage also tends to isolate this lineage, in part to their disadvantage.

The majority of the *Sheikhs* in the village are tenant farmers, and tend to be among the better situated. One occupies the position as mullah, to which his son will clearly succeed him. However, one of the *Sheikh* household heads is a landless labourer, giving a class distribution in the *Sheikh* lineage of 5 farmers / 1 labourer, as compared to 18 farmers / 4 labourers in the remainder of the community. The class position of the *Sheikh* lineage as a whole is thus not significantly high.

The status of this small *Sheikh* lineage might be contrasted to that of the above mentioned Leaders of Derwish, or to that of Sheikh Mahmud, both of whom have achieved their high position in part by virtue of their descent from the Prophet. The most reasonable generalization seems to be that membership in the *Sheikh* descent group defines a type of position in the religious field which contributes to the general esteem in which a person is held, and which may, in certain situations, contribute to justify a high position of actual power, but which in no way automatically ascribes such power to the individual.

A category of travelling holy men, similarly claiming descent from Mohammed, are given the Arabic name *Seyyid* by Kurdish villagers. Whereas the Kurdish *Sheikhs* claim descent specifically from Hussein, one of Mohammed's two grandsons, through a medieval Persian theologian, the claims of the wandering *Seyyids* are more variable. On the other hand, this reference to religious sanctity forms the basis of their livelihood. The spellation *Sheikh* need only imply high rating on a purely religious scale of sanctity — *Seyyids* convert this into a definite status position, fundamental to their occupation. Preferably conspicuously clothed, and wearing green head-dress as a symbol of their status, they ride from village to village carrying old

7: Barth E-5 (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

Chapter VIII.

Conclusion

The types of Kurdish social organization described above seem, even apart from their local cultural dress, somewhat different from those usually reported by anthropologists. Especially the combination in the «tribal» organization of a lineage system, close family endogamy, and a kinship terminology without unilineal emphasis poses some interesting problems.

It has been suggested (e. g. Murdock 1949, p. 234) that this Kurdish situation reflects the breakdown of a previous organization based on exogamous sib groups, following the introduction of Islam, with the Koranic permission, or even encouragement, to marry close kin. Clearly, this explanation is not sufficient, considering how fundamental the pattern seems in the Kurdish tribal organization, and the unusually high incidence of FaBrDa marriage as compared to other Muslim communities.

As far as the historical and comparative material goes, there is little reason to believe that the tendency towards close family endogamy is an Islamic innovation in the area. In appraising the historical material, it is important, as Lutbetak (1951) emphasizes, to distinguish between (a) classical centers of endogamy with examples of brother-sister marriage in royal lineages (Egypt, Sumer, Elam, Arabia, Persia), connected with a tremendous elaboration and emphasis on hereditary prestige, and (b) areas where close family endogamy was a basic feature of the social organization, and operated

7: Barth E-5 (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

on a village level. Eliminating the cases of type (a), there is still ample evidence of endogamous patterns of non-Islamic or pre-Islamic origin, especially in the Caucasus-Armenian area, of which the Kurdish mountains are geographically an extension. The customary law of Daghestan prescribes close kin marriage, and explicitly forbids the marriage with an outsider (ibid). The early ecclesiastical laws of Armenia attack next-of-kin marriages with great vehemence (ibid, p. 54), and such practices caused great concern among the early Christian missionaries, till they were eventually rooted out. Thus, rather than regard the Kurdish combination of patterns as a labile state produced by cross-cultural mixture, it would seem reasonable to grant the Kurdish «tribal» organization considerable antiquity as a stable variant or *type* of lineage organization, of some theoretical interest.

On a structural level, it can be argued that a pattern of FaBrDa marriage serves to reinforce the political implications of the lineage system. Solidarity to the patrilineal descent group in abstracto is minimal. Close family endogamy results in a direct correspondence between lineage segments and local groups, giving the descent groups a clear territorial framework in which the lineage organization can function. On the individual level, a man's political position and power depends in the last instance on the number of riflemen he can muster. However, only co-lineage males can be expected to give such political support. A pattern of FaBrDa marriage contributes to prevent alienation of immediate collateral lines, and re-affirms the old man's leading position in relation to his agnatic nephews, thereby vesting him with control over a larger agnatic group of males.

Where the lineage is found in other areas as a corporate group, it is usually connected with a kinship terminology of the «lineage» type, which, through unilineal emphasis and classificatory extensions contributes in defining and delimiting these corporate groups. Kurdish kinship terms, on the other hand, are purely «descriptive» in that they measure genealogical distance between near kin. Nor do they show any unilineal emphasis. In other words, they do not contribute in any way to the definition of unilineal corporate groups. However, when this terminology is seen in combination with the

8: Leach E-S (1938) 1940 MA11 Kurd MA11
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In the ideal, the Kurdish family which maintains ortho-cousin marriage and does not require the wife to change her place of residence on marriage forms what may be termed a "fraternional" group. Brothers are close neighbours or even share the same house. They frequently work their landholdings jointly, perhaps even in cooperation with their cousins. The marriage of ortho-cousins clearly serves to simplify and perpetuate such cooperation. However in such a case the bride-price, whatever its nominal amount - and the Kurds are keen to flatter their wives by asserting that they have paid a quite fabulous price for them, - is in practice nothing but a sort of book entry, a transfer of assets from the right hand to the left. Even where the marriage to father's brother's daughter does not take place, there is still a strong tendency for a man to marry a girl from his own village - i.e. a classificatory "ortho-cousin" - if for no other reason than that the Agha must approve of all marriages and he has an obvious interest in keeping the group as closely unified as possible. Besides, a man of the commoner class would normally have comparatively few opportunities of either meeting or bargaining for a girl from another village, still less for a girl of another clan or tribe. Startling romances and elopements do take place, but they are the exception and are usually followed by a long and bloody trail of vengeance. For the commoner the general rule of marriage within the knife is fairly well maintained. In this connection the building of the road will probably have important consequences for the Balik in the near future, since the ordinary tribesman can now much more readily make contact with groups other than his own immediate kinsfolk.

592. 592 [illegible]

Marriage of Aghas

The foregoing applies however only to the marriage arrangements of commoner families (hemseng). Quite different are the conditions that govern the marriage of the son of an Agha. Mohammedan law permits a man to have four wives at a time, and to effect divorce simply by the pronouncement of the word taleq three times. In practice scarcely any of the commoners among the Balik can afford more than one wife, and polygyny is the almost exclusive prerogative of the Aghas. The marriage to father's brother's daughter serves to simplify and concentrate the inheritance of cattle, implements and other items of 'capital' equipment within the economic working unit of the group household and to avoid friction over the inheritance of tenancy rights. But the Agha is not swayed by considerations of inheritance alone, in the limited sense already described, he 'owns' all the available land anyway and there is no question of splitting up the territory at death. His aim rather is to gain prestige and live at peace with his neighbours. We find therefore that the marriages of Aghas tend to take the form of political alliances, rather after the style of the royal marriages of mediaeval Europe. Sheikh Mohammed Agha of Balah for instance, who in the course of a long life has had 9 wives and 23 surviving children, appears to be related either by marriage or

8: Leach E-5 (1938) 1940 MA11 Kurd MA11
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622 through the marriage of his sons to nearly every important leader,
• 581 tribal, religious, or townsmen, within fifty miles radius. More humble Aghas are content with one or two alliances with neighbouring notables, while the rest of their offspring are married off to members of their own community, thus further strengthening the bonds of kinship between the Agha and his followers. It is interesting to examine the effect of this in greater detail.

> Sheikh Mohammed of Balash was one of 9 surviving brothers; he himself has had nine wives and has six surviving sons, and several daughters

> Mir Hamid Aaka of Dergala has had 6 wives and 24 children of which there survive 9 sons and 5 daughters.

If we consider the male side of the tree only, it would appear that the average reproduction rate of a 'princely' Agha is of the order of 8 surviving sons. If we assume that the total population of the villages remains very roughly stationary we must reach the conclusion that the effective birthrate is very heavily loaded in favour of the Aghas. The effect of this would seem to be that in many of the smaller villages the Agha is not only of the same clan as nearly everyone but actually quite closely related to about half the population. I was unable to make any accurate census of a village but my observations at Balash were I think reasonably accurate, and tend to confirm this calculation.

622 There appeared to be twelve separate households, of which four
592 are accounted for by the Agha's fortress and the establishments of his third and fourth married sons and of a brother. (The two eldest sons have been established as Aghas in their own right over neighbouring villages). The population I estimated at ninety, in the proportion twenty five men, thirty women, thirty five children. The Aghas household appeared to consist of about twenty persons including his youngest children and personal servants; while the households of his married sons and his brother contained about eight persons each. In this case therefore quite half the population of the quad was in immediate kinship or economic relationship with the Agha. The case may be exceptional, but serves to explain why a rental of 5% of the yield of the land does not in practice prove entirely exterminate.

622 Comparison of these observations and those of Bay

414 The foregoing account shows the interrelationship of the
114 political and kinship organisation among the Balik Kurds. As a commentary upon sociological method it is interesting to note what

> "This village would appear to be fairly average as far as size is concerned, though centres such as Dergala and Barge are vastly larger. Balash however is in some respects the private fortress of Sheikh Mohammed and its kinship organisation may not be typical.